IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-34. (Canceled)

35. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method for communicating between systems,-comprising:

providing a developer system configured for developing applications, the developer system comprising a first database;

providing a problem management system configured to detect defects in the applications being developed on the developer system, the problem management system comprising a second database, in which at least one of the systems is configured to prevent the other of the two systems from directly accessing its respective database;

determining, at the problem management system, storage of a test incident report in the second database, the test incident report documenting a defect with respect to an application being developed on the developer system;

wherein the storage of the test incident report in the second database comprises a predetermined event causing automatic execution of a first database update operation to effect an update of the first database, the operation comprising:

generating, at the problem management system, a first encoded electronic mail message containing the test incident report taken from the second database;

invoking a first e-mail code to email the first encoded electronic mail message from the problem management system to the developer system;

invoking a second e-mail code to receive, at the developer system, the first encoded electronic mail message;

decoding the received first encoded electronic mail message to extract the test incident report; and

modifying at least an item of data stored in the first database based on the contents of the extracted test incident report.

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36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the first electronic mail message contains information selected from at least one of: an action to be performed by the developer system, an identification for the second system, an identification for the first system, a description of an application defect, and a remark.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 35, wherein the problem management system comprises a Lotus® Notes® system.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the developer system comprises a Configuration Management and Version Control application.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, further comprising, in response to receiving at the developer system an indication of the defect having been fixed, automatically executing a second database update operation to effect an update of the second database, the second operation comprising:

generating, at the developer system, a second encoded electronic mail message containing a resolution document taken from the first database, the resolution document documenting the fix of the defect;

invoking the second e-mail code to email the second encoded electronic mail message from the developer system to the problem management system;

invoking the first e-mail code to receive, at the problem management system, the second encoded electronic mail message;

decoding the received second encoded electronic mail message to extract the resolution document; and

modifying at least an item of data stored in the second database based on the contents of the extracted resolution document.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein modifying at least the item of data stored in the second database based on the contents of the extracted resolution document is done only after independently verifying that the defect has been fixed.

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41. (Currently Amended) A computer system, comprising:

(a) at least one processor and at least one memory containing instructions executable by the at least one processor;

([[a]]b) a developer system defined as at least a first portion of the instructions which when executed by the at least one processor configures the at least one processor configured for developing applications, the developer system comprising:

a first database;

a first e-mail communications facility configured to encode, send and decode electronic mail messages; and

a first interactive interface; and

(c[[b]]) a problem management system defined as at least a second portion of the instructions which when executed by the at least one processor configures the at least one processor configured to detect defects in the applications being developed on the developer system, and the problem management system comprising:

a second database;

a second e-mail communications facility configured to encode, send and decode electronic mail messages; and

a second interactive interface;

(d[[c]]) a network connecting the first system and the second system; wherein in which at least one of the two systems is configured to prevent the other of the two systems from directly accessing its respective database and wherein the systems are configured to automatically initiate email-based database update operations in response to predetermined events;

-wherein the problem management system is configured to initiate a first database update operation in response to a first predetermined event comprising storage, at the problem management system, of a test incident report in the second database, the test incident report documenting a defect with respect to an application being developed on the developer system; wherein the first

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database update operation is configured to effect an update of the first database, the first database update operation comprising:

generating, at the problem management system, a first encoded electronic mail message containing the test incident report taken from the second database;

invoking a first e-mail code to email the first encoded electronic mail message from the problem management system to the developer system;

invoking a second e-mail code to receive, at the developer system, the first encoded electronic mail message;

decoding the received first encoded electronic mail message to extract the test incident report; and

modifying at least an item of data stored in the first database based on the contents of the extracted test incident report; and

-wherein the developer system is configured to initiate a second database update operation, to effect an update of the second database, in response to a second predetermined event comprising an indication of the defect having been fixed, the second operation comprising:

generating, at the developer system, a second encoded electronic mail message containing a resolution document taken from the first database, the resolution document documenting the fix of the defect;

invoking the second e-mail code to email the second encoded electronic mail message from the developer system to the problem management system;

invoking the first e-mail code to receive, at the problem management system, the second encoded electronic mail message;

decoding the received second encoded electronic mail message to extract the resolution document; and

modifying at least an item of data stored in the second database based on the contents of the extracted resolution document.

42. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[40]] 41, wherein the problem management system comprises a Lotus® Notes® system.

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43. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[40]] <u>41</u>, wherein the developer system comprises a Configuration Management and Version Control application.

44. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[40]] <u>41</u>, wherein the first and second e-mail communications facilities comprise e-mail clients.

45. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ <u>system</u> of claim [[40]] <u>41</u>, wherein modifying at least the item of data stored in the second database based on the contents of the extracted resolution document is done only after independently verifying that the defect has been fixed.

46. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[40]] <u>41</u>, wherein the first encoded electronic mail message contains information selected from at least one of: an action to be performed, a system identification, a description of a defect, and a remark.

47. (Currently Amended) A <u>tangible</u> ~~signal-bearing~~ <u>storage</u> medium, comprising a program which, when executed by a processor, performs an operation for communicating between a developer system configured for developing applications and a problem management system configured to detect defects in the applications being developed on the developer system, the systems having a first database and a second database, respectively, in which at least one of the systems is configured to prevent the other of the two systems from directly accessing its respective database, the operation comprising:

detecting, at the problem management system, storage of a test incident report in the second database, the test incident report documenting a defect with respect to an application being developed on the developer system; wherein the storage of the test incident report in the second database comprises a predetermined event causing automatic execution of a first database update operation to effect an update of the first database, the first database update operation comprising:

generating, at the problem management system, a first encoded mail message containing the test incident report taken from the second database;

invoking a first e-mail code to email the first encoded electronic mail message from the problem management system to the developer system;

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invoking a second e-mail code to receive, at the developer system, the first encoded electronic mail message;

decoding the received first encoded electronic mail message to extract the test incident report; and

modifying at least an item of data stored in the first database based on the contents of the extracted test incident report.

48. (Currently Amended) The tangible ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 47, wherein the first electronic mail message contains information selected from at least one of: an action to be performed by the developer system, an identification for the second system, an identification for the first system, a description of an application defect, and a remark.

49. (Currently Amended) The tangible ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 47, wherein the problem management system comprises a Lotus® Notes® system.

50. (Currently Amended) The tangible ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 47, wherein the developer system comprises a Configuration Management and Version Control application.

51. (Currently Amended) The tangible ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 47, further comprising, in response to receiving at the developer system an indication of the defect having been fixed, automatically executing a second database update operation to effect an update of the second database, the second database update operation comprising:

generating, at the developer system, a second encoded electronic mail message containing a resolution document taken from the first database, the resolution document documenting the fix of the defect;

invoking the second e-mail code to email the second encoded electronic mail message from the developer system to the problem management system;

invoking the first e-mail code to receive, at the problem management system, the second encoded electronic mail message;

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decoding the received second encoded electronic mail message to extract the resolution document; and

modifying at least an item of data stored in the second database based on the contents of the extracted resolution document.

52.   (Currently Amended) The <u>tangible</u> ~~signal-bearing~~ <u>storage</u> medium of claim 51, wherein modifying at least the item of data stored in the second database based on the contents of the extracted resolution document is done only after independently verifying that the defect has been fixed.

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